GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RAILWAYS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2287
ANSWERED ON:17.08.2006
PRODUCTION OF RAILWAY WHEELS AND AXLE
Singh Shri Chandrabhan Bhaiya

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether a number of overseas rail companies have shown interest in purchasing wheels and axles from the Government Rail Wheel and Axle Factory;

(b) If so, whether the Railways have expressed its inability to meet the demand of wheels and axles;

(c) If so, whether two − third demands of rail wheels and axles are met through imports despite the wheels and axles are manufactured by Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL), Durgapur Steel Plant and Tata Iron and Steel Company (TISCO);

(d) If so, whether there is shortage of rail wheels even after production of same by Railway Wheel Factory, Bangalore and Durgapur Steel Plant;

(e) The total production of the railway wheels every year in the country, factory-wise; and

(f) The requirement of the railway wheels every year in the country ?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU)

(a) Yes, Sir. In the recent past, enquiries have been received from the firm M/s. Mariano A Cochet,Argentina; Swiss Federal Railways and Scottish Railways.

(b) Rail Wheel Factory (RWF) has expressed its inability to meet these demands for wheels and axles,because the entire production of RWF is required for Indian Railways, for new manufacture, and its maintenance requirements for existing rolling stock, and even then there is shortage of wheels and axles.

(c) & (d)No, Sir. The total annual requirement of wheels and axles of Indian Railways is approximately 2,40,000 and 77,000 nos. respectively. The manufacturing capacity of the two indigenous sources i.e. Rail Wheel Factory, Bangalore and Steel Authority of India Limited (Durgapur Steel Plant) put together is about 2,00,000 wheels and about 52,850 axles respectively. Tata Iron and Steel Company is not presently producing wheels and axles.

Only shortfall quantity of wheels which is around 40,000 Nos. and axles around 25,000 are being imported. Wheels for high horse power locomotives and high speed coaches etc. for which requirements are small are also imported since economies of scale do not permit indigenous production. However, indigenous development of these wheels has been taken up and such production will be concurrent with the growth in volumes. The reasons for import of wheels are therefore shortage of capacity and requirement of special type of wheels.

(e) The annual production capacity (as assessed for the current year, i.e. 2006-07) of Steel Authority of India Limited/Durgapur Steel Plant is 80,000 approx. The annual production capacity of Rail Wheel Factory, Bangalore is 1,15,000 approx.

(f) The present requirement of railway wheels is 2,40,000 approx. as assessed for the current year, i.e. 2006-07.